

Revised January 5, 2012

perform many functions that will alleviate the need to travel to the Post Office for many services. Rural route delivery to customers provides similar access to many retail services, thereby stemming the need to travel to the Post Office. FD at 2, 3-5, 6, 9; Item No. 33, Proposal, at 2, 3-4, 5, 6, 8. In fact, most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. The rural carrier provides many of the services that are available at the Post Office. Furthermore, many of the services offered are available the same day and do not require advance notice for the transaction to be completed. Services available from the carrier include mailing certain packages, purchasing postal money orders, and obtaining a variety of special services, including sending accountable mail.¹⁵

Additionally, the record explains that carrier pickup is available. Carrier pickup allows for scheduling the retrieval of packages at the same time as the carrier delivers the mail. *Id.* Carrier service is especially beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to roadside mailboxes, thereby eliminating the need to travel to a Post Office. The Petitioner asserts that the elderly and infirm will be greatly affected by the closure of the Adona Post Office; however, the rural carrier will be able to assist postal customers in a similar capacity to the current OIC. Additionally, special provisions are made for

¹⁵ If the carrier attempts to deliver accountable mail and the addressee is unable to sign for the letter, the carrier will leave a Form 3849 informing the addressee that the carrier attempted to deliver an accountable letter, but was unable. The form indicates that the letter is available at the local post office or the addressee may attempt to request redelivery. The addressee is given the option to specify the date he or she would like the letter to be delivered, change the redelivery address to his or her workplace (if the work location is in the same town), or designate a friend, neighbor or family member to accept the letter and the carrier will deliver the letter to that individual (if the individual is in the same town). The original addressee may also receive the letter at the Perry Post Office on Saturday during business hours or the addressee's designee may receive the letter at the Perry Post Office, Monday through Saturday during business hours. The Postal Service makes available several options for customers that choose to utilize Rural Route service and receive accountable mail but are unable to be home during the week to sign for such mail.

hardship cases and special customer needs to ensure that customers receive regular and effective postal services. FD, at 3. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the administrative postmaster for more information. *Id.*

Additionally, the Postal Service explained that it offers several convenient options which can save customers a trip to the Post Office. FD, at 3; Item No. 33, Proposal, at 3, 4. If internet access is unavailable, stamps can be purchased by phone via a toll-free number, or by mail. FD, at 3; Item No. 33, Proposal, at 3. Additionally, customers can place their mail on hold and obtain other special services by calling a toll free number or visiting the Postal Service's website. Furthermore, if internet access is available, customers can purchase stamps online through the Postal Service's website at www.USPS.com and print shipping labels with postage for Express Mail and Priority Mail.

Petitioner's concern about the security of mail was also addressed in the record. Local officials solicited information regarding this matter, and the agency found only three reports of mail theft or vandalism in the area. Item No. 14, Inspection Service/local law enforcement vandalism reports, at 1. Additionally, the Postal Service explained that customers may place a lock on their mailboxes as long as the mailbox has a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. FD at 2, 3. Furthermore, customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail and will not have to pay post office box fees. FD, at 3. Customers are also welcome to conduct postal business at the Perry Post Office or any other convenient Post Office location should they decide this option better suit their needs.